VOX DEI:

THE VOICE OF GOD,

To

The Officers of the ARMY.

Wherein

Is ſhewed directly and poſitively, what is the indubitable way in which they ought now to walk: wherein if they do walk, it will aſſuredly go well with them, and the Lord of Hoſts will be in the midſt of them, and the God of *Jacob* will be their refuge.

BEING

Some Precepts which the Lord ſet upon the Heart of a poor Creature to ſhew unto them;

The which if they obey not, will be one witneſs for God againſt them, that he left them not without Remembrancers; he having many other ſuch witneſſes in this Nation, and in this City.

Yee are my friends, if you do whatſoever I command you, Joh. 15. 14.

If you know theſe things, happy are ye if ye doe them, Joh. 13. 17.

LONDON:

Printed by *F.C.* for *L. Chapman.* 1659.

THe Authour (who desires not to be publickly known, is notwithstanding well known to the Lord *Fleetwood*, and several other Officers of the Army) hath appointed 500. of these sheets to be given among the Officers, meeting at *Wallingford* House.

To the Lord Fleetwood, and the reſt of the Officers of the Army, in their General Council.

MY Lord, and you the Gentlemen of the General Council; or rather, Honoured Brethren, who I hope are in the fear of the Lord, aſſembled by the Lord, to conſult about ſuch things as the Lord hath determined to bring to paſs, for the glory of his great name in the earth. *To meditate terror*, Iſa. 33. 18.

Having heard that it was your deſire, that all the Lords people ſhould pray for you; profeſſing your ſelves (to be weak and feeble, and not able of your ſelves, to do any ſervice for God) to be in the dark, and not knowing (unleſs the Lord ſhould guide you) what to do, nor how to manage the great Affairs that are in your hands: I finding my ſelf engaged, to beg mercy from the Lord for you, did this morning finde theſe following impreſſions on my heart, to preſent unto you from the Lord.

And I intreat you to examine them; and beſeech you, in the name of the Lord, to conſider ſeriouſly of what herein you in your own ſpirits ſhall be perſwaded and aſſured is from the Lord (what you ſhall finde elſe, if there be any thing elſe, you may trample under your feet, as a veſſel in which is no pleaſure) and be ſure you neither ſlight it, nor prove diſobedient to it; leſt you forſake your own mercy, and chuſe your own ruine. *Thus ſaith the Lord, thy redeemer, the holy One of Iſrael, I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou ſhouldeſt go; O that thou hadſt hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteouſneſs as the waves of the Sea*, Iſa. 48. 18, 19.

This word of the Lord I beſeech you to weigh, and to obſerve, to prepare you to receive and to hearken to the will and to the Commandments of Lord, as they are followingly declared unto you, as that which is your great concernment to do, in this preſent juncture of time; which as many of you as are guided by the Spirit of the Lord, will ſee and acknowledge.

You profeſs your ſelves this day to be weak, and that you know not which way to go. And it is true, that you do not know of your ſelves; and you will make but poor work of what you do, if you be left to your ſelves, and to your own weakneſſes: you will rather bring trouble on your ſelves, and diſtreſs on theſe Nations, then do your ſelves or them any good, if the Lord do not wonderfully appear, to guide you.

But for your encouragement, conſider firſt, That though poor creatures, that are in truth the Lords ſervants, know not how to cure themſelves, when rent and torn, nor how to profit nor advantage others by removing from one condition to another, that yet the Lord, who is the holy One of Iſrael, is their Redeemer, and their God, and will not caſt them off.

Thus ſaith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the holy One of Iſrael, I am the Lord thy God.

And Secondly, That this Lord, who is their Redeemer and their God, is he that teacheth them profit: It is he that helps them in their undertakings, which they undertake in the fear of his Name: ſo that they ſhall not labour in vain, and weary themſelves for very vanity; but ſhall do what they do to purpoſe; ſhall do it with advantage, ſhall do it with profit. *I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit.*

And Thirdly, That he is the Lord, that doth lead his people, when they know not which way to go, but are wholly in the dark, and give up themſelves to him, to be led and guided: and when they will not lean to their own underſtanding, but commit their way unto the Lord; that then he is the Lord, that doth lead them in the way they ſhould go, in which they ought to go: he will lead them into a right way, and they ſhall not erre therein. *I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee in the way that thou ſhouldeſt go.*

And theſe things conſidered, are encouragements enough for all the Lords poor ſervants in ſuch a caſe: what can they deſire more?

And now dear Sirs, If you do in ſincerity deſire to know, how you may profit your ſelves and theſe poor Nations, and to be led in the way that you ſhould go; Then conſider the following word of the Lord: *O that thou hadſt hearkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteouſneſs as the waves of the ſea:* which doth imply, that when the Lord would teach his people to profit, and lead them in the way they ſhould go, there is ſometimes an aptneſs in them to turn the deaf ear, and not to hearken to his Commandments; but rather to liſten to the Idols that are ſet up in their own hearts, which frequently brings them into diſtreſs. But he tells them, that if they had hearkened unto him, then their ſouls would have been full of peace, then had they abounded in holineſs; whereas when they walk in other waies, they do not know peace; and they have poor, barren, dead, unfruitful hearts in the waies of righteouſneſs: but ſaith the Lord, *If thou hadſt hearkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteouſneſs as the waves of the ſea.*

But Now Sirs, If you do indeed deſire to know the Lords mind, and if you be not as thoſe of which the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſpeaks, that deſired in word, that they might know the mind of the Lord; and yet were reſolved before-hand what to do; which reſolution of theirs proved their ruine, becauſe it led them to do contrary to the mind of the Lord: then,

Jer. 42.

In the firſt place, I muſt tell you, that this is the mind and will of the Lord, *That you ſhould deny your ſelves.* Mat. 16. 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs and follow me:* (the Greek word is, *utterly deny himſelf.*)

Mar. 18. 34. Luk. 9. 23.

That this is your great duty, and that it is the Lords mind and will that you ſhould thus do at this preſent time, is a truth that none of you, I believe, will dare to oppoſe or gainſay in words; but you will acknowledge, that ſelf-denial is a bleſſed vertue where it is; and that it is that which the Lord commands, and requires you that profeſs your ſelves to be followers of him to do. And if ſo, then, O be not found

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diſobedient unto the Lord herein; but hearken unto this his Commandment. If you can deny that this is the Lords Commandment to you, then you may a little the more eaſily neglect it: but if you cannot but acknowledge, but that this is your Lords will; then it will be a ſad account, that you will have to make, if you ſhall ſlight or neglect it.

But, I hope better things of you, and therefore do beſeech you in the name of the Lord, as though God did beſeech you by me, *To deny your ſelves*; and whatſoever you do, or whatſoever comes to be debated among you, be ſure that you lay aſide ſelf-ends, and ſelf-intereſt, and ſelf-concernments; and with a holy indignation trample them under your feet, when ever they come in competition with any thing, that may be for the glory of God, or for the good of his people in general, or the benefit of this Commonwealth.

If you love the Lord, and deſire to keep his Commandments, then manifeſt in all your debates and actions, that you are not a Mercenary Army: That you the Leaders of the Army in particular are not Mercenary men: That you have not in your hearts, that curſed weed, the love of money, which is the root of all evil.

But tell the Nations in general, that you ſeek not theirs, but them; That you ſeek not their wealth but their weale, and manifeſt it in all your actions.

And herein will God be glorified, when it ſhall be manifeſt unto the world, that thoſe that profeſs themſelves to be his ſervants, do the ſervice they do for their God in the world; for the love they have to their God, and to his ſervice, and not for the love of the world. When it ſhall be mainfeſt, that the ſervice of God is dearer to them, then the greateſt delights in the world; that they prefer opportunities of ſerving him, and doing thoſe things that are for the honour and glory of his name, and the good of his people, above their chief joy, above any creature-enjoyments and comforts that are in themſelves good and lawful, *viz.* above relations, wives, children, parents, brethren, ſiſters, delightful companions, friends, familiars; above titles of honour, ſtately houſes, pleaſant gardens, or whatſoever elſe is delightful unto the ſons of men, that are but Sublunary enjoyments. When it ſhall be manifeſt to the world, that they are cloathed with the Sun of righteouſneſs the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and have the Moon under their feet. When their hearts are ſo lifted up in the waies of the Lord, as they make it their great work in the world, to do the will and work of God. And as the Martyr in another caſe cryed out, *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt:* ſo they make it their great buſineſs in the world to ſerve the Lord: And when ſelf-intereſts, or temptations to pleaſe this or that great man comes in, they cry out, None but the Lord Chriſt ſhall be our Lord and Maſter, and no work is like his work, no ſervice is ſo good as his ſervice.

Pſa. 137. 6.

Rev. 12. 1.

Mal. 4. 2.

I ſay, Herein will God be glorified, when it appears that his ſervants are ſuch, as obey him from their hearts; and ſo delight in his ſervice, as they are in a holy manner careleſs (according to 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. *Phil.* 4. 6. *Mat.* 6. 25.) of their own concernments, taking no care how to lay up great portions for their children, and to leave great revenues behinde them, for their dear off ſpring; but caſting their care of them upon the Lord, knowing that the bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich, and that it is not a careful making great proviſion for their Children, that will do them any good, unleſs the Lord give them eſtates with his bleſſing; knowing that many have taken

great care to lay up great estates for their Children, and have piereed
1 Tim. 6. 10. themselves thorow with many sorrows to obtain them, and suddainly God hath blasted them: and those children that have had no estates laid up for them by their Parents, have been enriched, and blest with great estates, when the others have been in great necessities and streights.

And when the Lords servants have their hearts so engaged in the faithful service of the Lord, as that they are ready, as there is occasion, to lay out their estates freely for the promoting of the work of the Lord, and are not covetous of hoarding up of riches, but knowing that in laying it out freely for their Lords service, they shall lay up great portions for their children, and it will really turn to their account; knowing if they trust the Lord with their children, that he will surely be a faithful Overseer of them; and they shall be no loosers, but great gainers thereby: I say, When the Lords servants do thus do, they do herein glorifie God, and purchase great peace for their own souls.

Now Honoured Sirs, Do you not think that if some of you, that have estates, should declare, that you would serve the Commonwealth freely; and some of you that have not such estates, that you would serve upon the terms *Abraham* did (*Gen.* only for what the young men have eaten) only for what is necessary to maintain you in your several places, with horses and all necessary accommodation sutable to your places; so that the world might have no cause to say, that henceforward you are made any richer, then you now are by the Publick stock: Do you not think that this would be for the honour of God, and for your own honour also, upon the most Noble and best account? surely it would appear so, even in the sight of Heathens and Infidels, much more in the sight of good men; and it being your duty, and that which the Lord requires of you, it would be your happiness, if you did excel in this eminent vertue of denying your selves.

Now that self-denial, is that which the Lord requires of you, and that wch will make you fit to do the Lords work, is that which I do from the Lord declare unto you. But how far, and in what manner, and what degree, I have no Commission to declare unto you; as, whether Colonels, Majors, and Captains, should be content with half pay, or less or more: The degree is left to your discretions, and to your free will; for what is done, is to be done freely, and of a ready minde, or else it is not done at all acceptably. But this I am to tell you, that those that come to the highest degree of true self-denial in this day of doing the Lords work, will be most acceptable, whether higher or more inferiour Officers.

And now it will be a point of Wisdom in you all, to have the highest esteem of those that are now among you, or those that shall come in among you (that were of you, that upon the account of Conscience either left you, or were put out from among you) that do appear most self-denying; and whenever you do observe speeches or actions in any of you, savouring of self-seeking, to be jealous of such a man, and every man of his own heart in such a case; and to account that person the more suspitious, and the more unfit for the service of the Lord, in this present day.

Secondly, I am to tell you, that the Lord requires you now in an especial manner to love mercy, and to make it your great care, now you have such an opportunity in your hand, to be found in the works of mercy, and to be sure that you be supporters of none in Places of Authori-

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ty, but ſuch as have hearts free and ready to do works of mercy. You are not to faſt for ſtrife and debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſs, but to be found in the exerciſe of mercy and compaſſion, and bowels of tenderneſs to thoſe that are in diſtreſs; that you ſhut not up your bowels of compaſſion, and hide not your ſelves from your own fleſh; when poor Creatures, whoſe fleſh is as your fleſh, and whoſe children are as your children, beg your aſſiſtance to procure that for them; that they freely disburſt on a publike account; that want it to feed and cloath their children; that you turn not away from ſuch, and ſuch like ſuiters, and yet at the ſame time confer great Revenues and great Offices of incoms one upon another; But that you draw out your ſouls to the hungry, and ſatisfie the afflicted Soul, by helping them all that in you lies. Iſa. 58. Neh. 5. 5.

That this is a work well pleaſing to God, all the Prophets and Saints of old do witneſs; and that this is the Lords commandment to you, and the way wherein you ſhould walk, none of you can deny. Oh then! let it be ſetled in your hearts, that through the Lords help you will be found doing ſuch things while it is in the power of your hand to do them, and that you will not ſet up nor ſupport any power, but what ſhall be free to obey the Lord herein.

Thirdly, To do juſtly, or to cauſe juſtice and righteouſneſs to be adminiſtred, is another duty, which God requires at your hands, and in the doing whereof you will honour him.

And how great a duty, and how bleſſed a work this is, it is in my purpoſe to preſent a larger Diſcourſe unto you ere long, which I had prepared for the Preſs a little before the death of the late Protector; but after his death until now, I had not a freedom or liberty to make it publike.

But in the mean time, you muſt know, that it is the *Unum Neceſſarium*, the one moſt neceſſary thing, with reſpect to the Publike-weal of theſe Nations, that God requires at your hands.

When the Lord, as is declared, *Iſa.* 5. had fenced and dreſſed his Vineyard, he *looked for judgment and for righteouſneſs*, ver. 7. And ſo you muſt know, and I preſume you do know, that now the Lord hath delivered poor *England* (which is the Vineyard of the Lord in a more eſpecial manner then any Nation of the Earth at this day, there being more of his Saints in it) from the rage of the wild Bores of the Foreſt, the Pope and his party, and the late King and his party, *&c.* which ſought to devour them with open mouth; that he looked for judgment and righteouſneſs here alſo: but may it not be ſaid, that hitherto, though he looked for judgment, yet behold oppreſſion; and for righteouſneſs, but behold a cry? It muſt not be thus always; for you knowing it is your Lords will, that judgment ſhould run down among you *as water, and righteouſneſs as a mighty ſtream*, if you do it not, ſad will be your account: he that knew his Lords will and did it not, was to be beaten with many ſtripes. O therefore, hearken to the Lords commandments herein, *Seek judgment, releeve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow*; and then, *though your ſins have been as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow*; *though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool*. And if you be willing and obedient herein, ye ſhall be bleſſed; but if you refuſe and rebel, ſad will be your doom, you and your poſterity may ſmart for it, to the third and fourth generation; for though the Lord may pardon the iniquity of thoſe that are his own people, yet he may viſit it with outward

ſtripes,

ſtripes, and with blaſtings of the outward eſtates of them and theirs.

Fourthly, I muſt tell you, that the Lord requires you in all you do, to walk humbly with your God. And that this is your duty, and a duty of great concernment unto you, and a way in which if you walk, you will enjoy the preſence of God, I hope you well know, and none of you will deny it.

The work you are about is great, and it is too high for you; it is of wonderful concernment to the glory of God in all the world: and now if you be not more then ordinary ballaſted with that precious Grace of humility, you will ſoon be overturned with ſome ſtrong blaſts of temptations, and your veſſel will ſadly miſcarry. O therefore, be little in your own eyes, and entertain not a high thought of your ſelves; do not think your ſelves wiſe enough, or ſtrong enough to manage the great affairs in your hand: But keep the ſenſe of this ſtill upon your hearts, that if the Lord leave you to your ſelves, you ſhall do nothing but diſhonour him, and bring diſtreſs and trouble upon your ſelves and upon theſe Nations. And be much in conſidering how lamentably you have miſcarried already, and be much in confeſſing of it, and confeſſing that ſuch is your weakneſs, as that you ſhall unavoidably miſcarry more ſadly then you have done heretofore, if the Lord do not grant unto you freſh ſupplies of grace, of wiſdome, ſtrength, courage, faithfulneſs, and heavenly mindedneſs, of every grace which you ſtand in need of. And dayly conſidering what poor, weak, worthleſs worms you are, be you dayly at the feet of the Lord, begging your dayly bread, dayly ſtrength, dayly mercy; and lean upon him continually, and never lean to your own underſtanding, nor truſt to your own ſtrength, as if you ſtood upon your own feet; but, *let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall:* and do all you do in fear and trembling, and leaning upon the Lord. *When Ephraim ſpake tremblingly, he was exalted in Iſrael; but when he offended in Baal, he dyed.* And if you abide always in the ſenſe of your own weakneſs, and in the fear of the Majeſty of Heaven, and tremble at his word, you may be aſſured, that he who is the high and lofty one, that dwells in the high and holy place, will grant you his preſence, he will be in the midſt of you in all your Conſultations, and he will not leave you nor forſake you; yea, the Lord your God will be with you, and the *ſhout of a King among you*, and you ſhall never want guidance, nor counſel, nor grace. The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way: for *God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.*

1 Cor. 10 12.
Hoſ. 13. 1.
Iſa. 57. 15. and 66. 2.
Numb. 23. 21.
Jam. 4. 6.
1 Pet. 5. 5.

Now Sirs, Remember theſe commandments of the Lord, as you have them contained in theſe two Scriptures, *Matth.* 16. 24.

Then ſaid Jeſus unto his Diſciples, If any man will come after me, let him utterly DENY HIMSELF, and take up his croſs and follow me: and Mic. 6. 8.

He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is GOOD, and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk HUMBLY with thy God.

And as the Lord ſaith of Sion, that ſhe is graven upon the palm of his hands, and her walls are continually before him; ſo in a ſence let your duties contained in theſe Scriptures be graven upon the palms of your hands, upon the poſts of your doors, upon the walls of your houſes, and be as frontlets between your eyes, that you may ſtill be ſtudying of how great concernment it is to you to DENY your ſelves, to love mercy, to do juſtly, and to walk HUMBLY with your God.

London, May 5. 1659. FINIS.